

**Testimony in Support of  
H.B. 6663, An Act Establishing the English Learners' Bill of Rights**

Lisa Hammersley, Executive Director  
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Chairmen McCrory and Currey, Ranking Members Berthel and McCarty, and distinguished members of the Education Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in strong support of H.B. 6663, An Act Establishing the English Learners' Bill of Rights, and thank you to Governor Lamont and Representatives Felipe and Candelaria for championing this piece of legislation.

H.B. 6663 is a terrific step in the right direction and will make a meaningful difference in the lives of families of English Language Learners. Currently, there are more than 45,000 English Learners in Connecticut, which means many parents likely rely on translation and interpretation services to understand the information being communicated to them by their child's school.

While native English speakers have no language barriers when advocating for the education needs of their children, parents who do not speak English are left in the dark about the academic progress of their children and do not know what types of support their students may need simply because they are not fluent in English.

A student should not be burdened with the task of translating documentation from their school. Regardless of what language they may speak, each Connecticut student is entitled to a quality education and parents have the right to resources and tools to be adequately involved.

This bill will help support families be able to engage with schools and ensure equitable language access and proper district communication to parents of English Learners. By enumerating the English Learners' Bill of Rights, parents will finally have the opportunity to seek guidance and support to remain involved in their children's education.

When our students can devote themselves to their studies without the additional burden of working as a part-time translator, we can invest in the educational success of all students. We should encourage parents everywhere to advocate for their child's needs and ensure a quality education for all, especially for students who need additional support.

The School and State Finance Project champions policies that allow all students to have equal opportunities to access education, and parents should have that same opportunity to be involved, regardless of what language they may speak. We urge the

Committee to support H.B. 6663 and enshrine protections for the parents of Connecticut students.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of this important legislation, and please feel free to contact me anytime should you have questions or would like to discuss this issue more.

Sincerely,

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**About the School and State Finance Project**

The School and State Finance Project is a nonpartisan, nonprofit policy organization that works collaboratively with policymakers, communities, and other key stakeholders to develop data-driven solutions that ensure all public school students receive equitable education funding that supports their learning needs.